

VZCZCXRO3544  
OO RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHHM  
DE RUEHJA #1835/01 2730324

ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 290324Z SEP 08  
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0223  
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 3107  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5448  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1340  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1310  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 2285  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4961  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2554  
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 3128  
RUEHBAD/AMCONSUL PERTH 1170  
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 3000  
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 001835

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MLS, EAP/MTS, DRL, DRL/AWH, DRL/IRF, S/CT  
NSC FOR E. PHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/26/2018

TAGS: PGOV KIRF KISL PHUM ID

SUBJECT: ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS CLASH WITH WITNESS SUPPORTERS  
AT TRIAL

REF: A. JAKARTA 1708

1B. JAKARTA 1593 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: DepPol/C Stanley J. Harsha, reasons 1.4 (b+d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Islamic extremists and a moderate Muslim paramilitary group clashed outside the courtroom during a break at the trials of militants Rizieq Shihab and Munarman--both are standing trial for their alleged participation in an attack on a peaceful pro-pluralism rally in Jakarta on June 1. Facing a lack of witness protection, intimidation, and physical assault, witnesses from the pro-pluralism group summoned the assistance of a paramilitary wing of the largest Muslim organization in Indonesia--around 30 of whom came in support. The witnesses have threatened to boycott the trial if the authorities will not protect them. The group has filed complaints with government human rights offices, but no action has been taken. Although positive that the GOI is moving forward with the trials, the situation is worsening. END SUMMARY

¶2. (C) During a break in the trials of Islamic Defender's Front (FPI) leader Rizieq Shihab and Islam Troop Commander Munarman (one name only), members of FPI skirmished outside the courthouse with around 30 members of Banser--a paramilitary group associated with Indonesia's largest Islamic organization, Nadhlatul Ulama (NU) and Abdurrahman Wahid's (Gus Dur) National Awakening Party (PKB). By and large, NU is a very moderate organization consisting of around 40 million Muslims. However, their paramilitary youth wing became notorious in the mid 1960s for its attacks on communists, labor unionists, and peasants. Between 1968 and 1999 they allegedly became more of a social club than a dangerous paramilitary organization, eventually evolving into so-called party police for the newly formed PKB.

¶3. (C) The militants are on trial for their alleged involvement in an attack on a peaceful rally in Jakarta on June 1. Dozens of activists from the National Alliance for the Freedom of Faith and Religion (AKKBB) were injured in the attack as police did little to protect them (See reftels). If convicted, Rizieq and Munarman face 5-7 years in prison.

¶4. (C) NU's Banser and FPI have a long history of bad blood. In 2006, Gus Dur's supporters were incensed when FPI members forced Gus Dur off the stage at an interfaith meeting in West Java because of his opposition to the anti-pornography bill. Gus Dur supporters clashed with FPI members in East Java in retaliation. Immediately following the June 1 attack in which NU members also were injured, Banser and other PKB-affiliated organizations converged on an FPI office in East Java -- Gus Dur's stronghold -- prompting that FPI branch to voluntarily disband its operations.

¶5. (C) Nong Darol, AKKBB organizer and former head of the Liberal Islam Network (JIL), is currently coordinating the witnesses in all the trials - there are four in total. Darol told poloff that witnesses were being severely intimidated by FPI members, who fill the courtroom and disrupt the hearings.

They continually shout insults during testimony--both at police witnesses and AKKBB witnesses--and have been videotaping all unknown attendees. Darol said the lead judge in the two cases (there are three judges), Panusunan Harahap, does little to stop the threatening FPI behavior, usually only asking them to calm down, but rarely disciplining them. He also easily loses control of the courtroom, adjourning early on one occasion and requiring a police escort to leave.

#### WHERE ARE THE POLICE

¶6. (C) Darol told us the number of police present in and around the courtroom depends on the day. Instead of

JAKARTA 00001835 002 OF 002

protecting the AKKBB activists, police generally blame them when tensions arise and ask the AKKBB members to leave the court building. The FPI are particularly brutal with female witnesses, she said, with at least two of the witnesses having withdrawn from the trial because they were traumatized. Darol herself has been hit on several occasions and groped by the FPI members, all in the presence of police.

¶7. (C) AKKBB activists have filed complaints with the National Commission on Human Rights (KOMNAS HAM) and the National Commission on Violence Against Women (KOMNAS PEREMPUAN). However, Darol told poloff that the government has taken no action and has not assured the safety of the witnesses. She said she had coordinated with the Banser to come to the courthouse to show support for the witnesses, who are now threatening to boycott the trials until the police can provide greater protection. The GOI has been praised for its swift arrest of the alleged perpetrators of the attacks and for bringing the cases quickly to trial. However, it clearly needs to get involved in maintaining the integrity of the process and the protection of the witnesses. We continue to monitor the situation and express our concerns to GOI officials.

HUME